1:Williams E,G-5 (1923-1925) 1930
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The Mambare and Kumusi are navigable by launch, the latter as far as Bogi, where in mining days the stores used to be put ashore some fifty-five miles from the mouth. But here already the flow of the stream is too strong for native transport, and canoes are rarely seen among the people of the neighbourhood.

While the Mambare and Kumusi are both powerful and impressive rivers they do not possess the same charm as the lesser Gira and Opi. Of the Gira Sir Wm. MacGregor, having admired the landscape of scattered hills and the elevated and fertile banks with their frequent villages, concluded that it was 'the most populous and certainly by far the most pleasant of our north-east coast rivers'.[1]

Sir George Le Hunte was sufficiently charmed by the lower Opi to write:

> 'I do not recollect ever being on a more beautiful stream. The banks lined now with the handsome dark-leaved nipa palms springing from the water, now with the spreading sago palm with its curious candelabra-shaped flowers rising straight above it, here a village landing-place with a group of tall graceful areca palms, across which a leaning cocoanut would curve above a cluster of red and golden crotons. . . . The water a deep brown, on which the reflections were so vivid that it was sometimes difficult to distinguish the real from the image. . . .'[2]

Had it been possible for Sir George to ascend the river further than 'about six miles', he would have found a strong flowing stream whose rocky bed is visible through its swift transparency, and which is alternately overshadowed by tall forest or exposed to the sunshine in some broad expanse of rapids; and he might well have been tempted to write with equal vividness and still more enthusiasm.

The northern rivers, however, do not always bear this idyllic aspect. They are subject to sudden rise, and the clear stream of yesterday is transformed overnight into a brown swirling flood, sweeping down masses of forest wreckage and rising over its banks to cover the surrounding country. At such a time it is hardly possible to stir abroad except on canoes or rafts, and some time after the subsidence of the water one may not be surprised to find one of these stranded high and dry among the trees.

[1] *Annual Report*, 1896–7, p. 31. [2] *Annual Report*, 1898–9, p. 21.